

# The Department of Community Planning & Development

City Hall, Lynchburg, VA 24504 434-455-3900

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**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Planning Division

**Date:** May 10, 2006

**Re:** **CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP): Master Plan Amendment for Lynchburg College Student Housing, 209 Amelia Street; 217 Bell Street; 518 Brevard Street; 317 College Street; 402, 417, 419 Lakewood Street; 1115 McCausland Street and 324 Vernon Street**

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## I. PETITIONER

Lynchburg College, 1501 Lakeside Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24501

**Representative:** Mr. John Lewis, Business Manager, Lynchburg College, 1501 Lakeside Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24501

## II. LOCATION

The subject properties are approximately .2 acres each and are located at 209 Amelia Street; 217 Bell Street; 518 Brevard Street; 317 College Street; 402, 417, 419 Lakewood Street; 1115 McCausland Street and 324 Vernon Street.

**Property Owners:** Lynchburg College, 1501 Lakeside Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24501

## III. PURPOSE

The purpose of this petition is to amend Lynchburg College's Master Plan to allow the conversion of nine (9) existing dwellings into college supervised student housing for four (4) to ten (10) students.

## IV. SUMMARY

- Petition agrees with the *Comprehensive Plan*, which recommends a Low Density Residential use for the subject properties
- Petition agrees with the Zoning Ordinance in that colleges and associated uses are permitted in residential districts upon approval of a Conditional Use Permit by the Planning Commission and the City Council.
- Petition proposes the conversion of nine (9) existing dwellings into supervised student housing for four (4) to ten (10) students.

**The Planning Division recommends approval of the conditional use permit petition.**

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## V. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. **Comprehensive Plan.** The Lynchburg *Future Land Use Map* recommends a Low Density Residential use for the area. These areas are dominated by single-family homes at densities of four (4) dwelling units per acre. Institutional uses that are compatible in scale with residential homes are appropriate in these areas.

Throughout the public forums held for the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, citizens emphasized the value they place on education. Quality educational opportunities must be provided for youth at the secondary school level and college level and for adults as part of continuing education. The City places high value on its colleges and will continue to support

their presence within the City and to work with them in coordinating City planning with campus master planning.

2. **Zoning.** The subject property was annexed into the City in 1976. The existing R-2, Low Density Single Family Residential zoning was established in 1978 with the adoption of the current *Zoning Ordinance*.
3. **Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).** The Zoning Official has determined that no variances will be needed for the project as proposed.
4. **Surrounding Area.** There have been several items requiring City Council approval in the immediate area:
  - On July 12, 2005, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the conversion of existing residences to student housing at 214 Bell Street, 185, 307 Vernon Street, & 404, 428 Lakewood Street.
  - On December 12, 2004, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the conversion of existing residences to student housing at 201 Bell Street, 224, 350 Vernon Street, 1123 McCausland Street, 121 Thomas Road, 310, 416, 432 Lakewood Street & 333 College Street
  - On October 12, 2004, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the construction of student housing and associated parking areas at 1501 Lakeside Drive.
  - On June 8, 2004 Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the conversion of existing residences to student housing at 191, 225, 235, 246, 302, 310, 311, 331, 348 Vernon Street and 316 and 426 Lakewood Street.
  - On June 12, 2001, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the development of student housing at 511 Brevard Street, 312,420, and 425 Lakewood Street, and 504 Westwood Avenue.
  - On June 13, 2000, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg Christian Academy's CUP petition for the temporary use of modular classrooms at 624 Thomas Road.
  - On March 14, 2000, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition to amend its master development plan for construction of student townhomes on campus at 1501 Lakeside Drive.
  - On July 13, 1999 Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the development of a college office and student housing at 341 College Street, 504 Brevard Street and 245 Vernon Street.
  - On August 11, 1998, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the use of an existing residence for student housing at 215 Vernon Street.
  - On June 9, 1998, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the amendment of the existing master plan for the construction of a gym and physical plant storage building at 1501 Lakeside Drive.
  - On May 12, 1998, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the development of special interest student housing at 512 Brevard Street.
  - On May 13, 1997, Lynchburg City Council approved Gethsemane Baptist Church's CUP

petition for the establishment of a play area and operation of a child care center for up to 49 children at 407 and 411 Blue Ridge Street.

- On December 12, 1995, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the amendment of the existing master plan to allow conversion of an existing residence for supervised student housing at 511 Brevard Street.
  - On January 12, 1993, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the amendment of the existing master plan for the construction of the School of Business at the 300 Block of College Street.
  - On April 9, 1991, Lynchburg City Council approved Gethsemane Baptist Church's CUP petition for the construction of new parking and the expansion of both the existing parking and the sanctuary at 408 and 411 Blue Ridge Street.
  - On August 1, 1989, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the development of college offices and student housing on College, McCausland and Brevard Streets.
  - On February 14, 1989, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the development of faculty offices at 505 Brevard Street.
  - On August 9, 1988, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the construction of a dormitory and office at 349 College Street.
  - On July 12, 1988, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the construction of office space at 185 Vernon Street and 500 Westwood Avenue.
  - On August 13, 1985, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the conversion of an existing residence hall to offices and construction of new classrooms/parking at College Street.
  - On September 25, 1984, Lynchburg City Council approved Lynchburg College's CUP petition for the development of an alumni house off of Lakeside Drive.
  - On October 28, 1980, Lynchburg City Council approved Lester Heyer's CUP petition for a Family Amusement Center off of Lakeside Drive.
5. **Site Description.** The subject properties are bounded to the north and south by a combination of residential, commercial and institutional uses and to the east and west by residential uses.
6. **Proposed Use of Property.** The purpose of the conditional use permit petition is to amend Lynchburg College's Master Plan to allow the conversion of nine (9) existing dwellings into student housing for four (4) to ten (10) students; the houses will be supervised by college staff. The petitioner proposes to provide gravel parking areas for all residences. The college will plant landscaping along the perimeter (where hedges and fencing do not already exist) of all parking areas to buffer the parking from adjacent non-college owned housing.
7. **Traffic and Parking.** The City's Traffic Engineer's had no comments of concern regarding traffic from the proposed student housing.

The submitted site plans indicate that parking will be provided in gravel lots behind the residences or in existing parking lots owned and operated by Lynchburg College. The college will plant landscaping along the perimeter (where hedges and fencing do not already exist) of all parking areas to buffer the parking from adjacent non-college owned housing.

8. **Storm Water Management.** New impervious areas associated with the conversion of the existing dwellings to student housing will be minimal. An agreement in lieu of plan will be used to address stormwater and erosion and sediment control issues. The proposed landscape buffer will result in slightly less runoff from the parking area as well as an improved stormwater quality benefit from the site.
9. **Emergency Services.** The City's Fire Marshal had no comments on the proposed rezoning and conditional use permit application.

The Police Department had no comments on the proposed rezoning and conditional use permit application.

10. **Impact.** Lynchburg College was founded on April 17, 1903, and is one of the oldest coeducational colleges in Virginia. The College is currently working on its strategic plan for the next ten (10) years. The plans call for a modest growth to two thousand five hundred (2,500) students up from the two thousand two hundred and forty-eight (2,248) students in the fall of 2004.

The college currently has student housing for one thousand five hundred and seventy-two (1,572) students. The college received approval from the City Council on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004 to construct an additional apartment building for one hundred and four (104) students with associated parking areas and subsequent permission on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004 to convert nine (9) existing dwellings into student housing for forty (40) students and on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005 to convert an additional five (5) dwellings into student housing for thirty-five (35) students. The current proposal is to convert nine (9) dwellings into student housing for fifty-five (55) students.

The College currently requires that "traditional" aged students live in College-owned housing until their senior year. During the senior year a student may live off campus, however it must be in an area zoned R-4 or R-5. These requirements instituted by the College have eliminated the ability of the students to rent single-family dwellings not under the ownership of the College. This has greatly reduced the usual area of concern of the potential for students to generate noise or cause other disruptive activities.

The submitted site plans indicate that parking will be provided in gravel lots behind the residences or in existing parking lots owned and operated by Lynchburg College to prevent an overflow of cars into the adjacent residential neighborhood. In addition, the college will plant landscaping along the perimeter (where hedges and fencing do not already exist) of all parking areas to buffer the parking from adjacent non-college owned housing.

The College has obtained CUP's for other student housing identical to these requests in the past. The College's presence and accountability for their students has been a benefit to the community. The proposed uses are considered to be compatible with the institutional and residential character of the neighborhood.

11. **Technical Review Committee.** The Technical Review Committee (TRC) reviewed the preliminary site plan on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006. Comments related to the proposed plan use were minor in nature and have or will be addressed by the developer prior to final site plan approval.

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## VI. PLANNING DIVISION RECOMMENDED MOTION:

**Based on the preceding Findings of Fact, the Planning Commission recommends to City Council approval of the Conditional Use Permit**

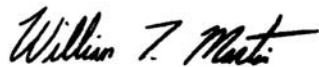
**petition of Lynchburg College to allow student housing for four (4) to ten (10) students at 209 Amelia Street; 217 Bell Street; 518 Brevard Street; 317 College Street; 402, 417, 419 Lakewood Street; 1115 McCausland Street and 324 Vernon Street.**

- 1. The properties shall be used in substantial compliance with the individual site plans for student housing:**

**217 Bell Street – six (6) students  
209 Amelia Street – four (4) students  
317 College Street – five (5) students  
402 Lakewood Street – six (6) students  
417 Lakewood Street – four (4) students  
419 Lakewood Street – four (4) students  
1115 McCausland Street – seven (7) students  
518 Brevard Street – ten (10) students  
324 Vernon Street – nine (9) students**

- 2. Any exterior lighting shall be glare shielded to prevent direct illumination beyond the property line.**
- 3. All residences shall comply with the building code as determined by the Building Official.**
- 4. All parking associated with the student housing will be in “off street” lots.**

This matter is respectfully offered for your consideration.



William T. Martin, AICP  
City Planner

pc: Mr. L. Kimball Payne, III, City Manager  
Mr. Walter C. Erwin, City Attorney  
Mr. Michael L. Thomas, Fire Marshal  
Mr. J. Lee Newland, Director of Engineering  
Lt. Danny R. Marks, Lynchburg Police Department Field Operations Bureau  
Capt. Todd Swisher, Lynchburg Police Department North Division  
Capt. J.P. Stokes, Lynchburg Police Department East Division  
Capt. Al Thomas, Lynchburg Police Department South Division  
Mr. Gerry L. Harter, Traffic Engineer

Mr. Robert Drane, Building Commissioner  
Mr. Keith Wright, Zoning Official  
Mr. Robert S. Fowler, Zoning Official  
Mr. Kent White, Senior Planner  
Ms. Erin Bryant, Environmental Planner  
Mr. John Lewis, Representative

## **VII. ATTACHMENTS**

- 1. Vicinity Zoning Pattern**  
(see attached map)
- 2. Vicinity Proposed Land Use**  
(see attached map)
- 3. Site Plans**  
(see attached site plans)